



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE AGENTS ARREST NINE INDIVIDUALS FOR USING FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS TO GAIN EMPLOYMENT AT LOUISIANA REFINERY ***-- Special Agents Team Up to Protect Petroleum Industry --***

NEW ORLEANS—Michael A. Holt, Special Agent-in-Charge of U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in New Orleans, and Jim Letten, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana, announced that special agents from ICE arrested nine illegal aliens employed by Great Barrier Insulation Company, based in Mobile, Alabama, for using fraudulent immigration documents and making false statements to gain employment at Marathon Ashland Petroleum Refinery in Garyville, Louisiana.

The arrests are part of an ongoing ICE criminal investigation of subcontractors operating in the petroleum industry. Critical infrastructures such as petroleum refineries, airports, defense installations, and bio-agricultural industries are a primary law enforcement priority of ICE.

The nine individuals were identified as possible illegal aliens by the Greater New Orleans Industrial Educational Counsel (GNOIEC), a non-profit organization that provides basic safety training to prospective employees before employees begin working at petroleum refineries and other critical infrastructure facilities.

As of today, nine illegal workers have been identified as prospective workers at Marathon Ashland Petroleum Refinery in Garyville, Louisiana. The individuals arrested were specifically identified either because their immigration status makes it unlawful for them to work in the United States or they presented fraudulent documents to gain employment. All of these individuals who are determined to be eligible for criminal prosecution will be considered for prosecution by the United States Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Louisiana and could subsequently face administrative removal proceedings.

"This was a targeted law enforcement action based upon extensive information developed over a long period," said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Holt. "Protecting the integrity of the petroleum industry in this region is a crucial part of ICE's continuing enforcement strategy. When an individual uses fraudulent documents to get a job, they hide their true identity and history. We need to know exactly who is working on our critical infrastructure programs."

Under federal law, employers who knowingly hire or refer unauthorized workers also face criminal prosecution and substantial fines.

To aid employers with the screening process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services operates the Basic Pilot Program, a Web-based system that businesses can use to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired workers. Nationwide, there are more than 15,000 employer sites linked into the Basic Pilot Program. Interested employers may call 1-888-464-4218 to obtain more information about the program.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.